

AGN. NO.

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

September 6, 2016

It is important to celebrate “Kinship Care Month” to recognize relative caregivers who provide children with safe, loving and stable homes during times of crisis. The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is steadfast in its commitment to promoting the safety and well-being of foster children, and this includes finding homes for children where they can be nurtured and supported, ideally by family. Over 50 percent of all foster children in Los Angeles County are raised in kinship care with grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings or extended family members. These relatives have stepped forward out of love and loyalty to care for their young family members, providing them with a sense of connection, security, and ties to their family, community, and cultural heritage.

Without the commitment of countless relative caregivers, DCFS would not be able to care for and tend to the needs of abused and neglected children under its charge. To help support these families, Los Angeles County put an end to the long-time financial disparity between relative caregivers eligible for federal assistance and those who are not. In response to a motion introduced by Supervisors Kuehl and Knabe in

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March of 2015, kinship caregivers are now eligible to receive payment equal to the basic foster care rate under the Approved Relative Caregiver program.

In addition to financial support, DCFS established Kinship Resource Centers to provide support groups, caregiver education, mentoring, educational advocacy, tutoring referrals, and many other services through referral and linkages to other services. More recently, DCFS has expanded these efforts in response to a motion introduced by Supervisors Kuehl and Ridley-Thomas in June of 2015 to create the Relative Support Services program in partnership with community-based organizations.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Declare the month of September 2016 as Kinship Care Month in Los Angeles County;
- 2) Encourage relative caregivers to access DCFS supportive services by calling the DCFS Kinship Resource Centers at (323) 298-3515 or (626) 430-3200 or visiting the DCFS Kinship website at www.lacdcfs.org/kinshippublic/default.html; and
- 3) Instruct the Auditor-Controller to print "September is Kinship Care Month. Call the DCFS Kinship Resource Centers at (323) 298-3515 or (626) 430-3200 or visit www.lacdcfs.org/kinshippublic/default.html" on all County warrants, and that the Director of the Department of Human Resources to include the same message on the electronic paystub viewer on e-CAPS.